

## Homemaker's Corner

By KATHERINE T. HUMPHREY  
Cooperative Extension Agent

A formal dinner can turn into a disaster, if diners become ill from eating foods improperly stored or carelessly prepared. Here are several ways to deter such disasters. Simple precautions can assure food is properly purchased, stored, prepared and served.

Salmonella, bacteria that produce food poisoning, can grow quickly in foods high in moisture and protein. Examples of such foods are milk products, meat, poultry, fish, shellfish, eggs and dishes made from these.

Handle food only with clean hands and utensils and by serving foods kept at proper temperatures. Hot foods need to be kept above 140 degrees, cold foods, below 40 degrees. If these foods are exposed long in the intermediate range, they can become a breeding ground for salmonella.

When shopping, select perishable foods last, making sure frozen foods are frozen. Canned food should be in undamaged containers, not swollen or dented.

Wash hands periodically during food preparation, especially after handling raw meat, poultry or eggs. Clean utensils and equipment frequently; otherwise, the risk of cross-contamination increases.

Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold until ready to serve. If pre-cooking hot foods, keep them refrigerated until ready to reheat. If transporting hot food, cover hot casseroles with several towels and serve within an hour. Using a styrofoam cooler works well too. Chill cold cuts and fillings. Shallow containers, self-closing plastic bags or ones with twist ties provide a convenient

and sanitary way to transport cold food.

Cover food held in the refrigerator until mealtime. After dining, promptly chill or discard leftovers.

Precautions in food preparation and serving assure a pleasant dining experience.

Sources: Cleanliness Facts, The Soap and Detergent Association.

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**Coming Events:**

**Working With Infants—** Workshop for care-givers covering developmental, enriching, loving and learning experiences for babies. Taught by Anne Genecco, Cooperative Extension regional specialist, Thursday, Jan. 21, 12:30 to 3:00 p.m. at Charles G. May Center in Mt. Morris. To register and obtain details, call 658-2131.

**Microwave Basics—** Selection, care and use of microwave ovens. Monday, Jan. 25, 10 a.m. until noon, Stone Presbyterian Church, Caledonia. Taught by Katherine Humphrey, Cooperative Extension Agent. Details and registration: 658-2131.

**Heart Smart—** Menu planning, food shopping and preparation, and tips for adapting your present lifestyle, food and exercise practices to a heart healthy program presented by a registered dietitian, a health nurse practitioner, and Cooperative Extension agents. Choose to come to one Wednesday evening, Jan. 27 at SUNY Genesee - call 245-5877; Thursday morning, Jan. 28, at Livingston County Cooperative Extension in Mt. Morris - call 658-2131; Thursday evening, Jan. 28, at Wyoming County Cooperative Extension - 786-2251.

### Girl Talk

### A Weekly Feature On Home-Kitchen Subjects

The explosion of information about children and child rearing may confront parents with advice that appears confusing or sometimes downright contradictory. A good example in advice about how parents should "help" their children with homework.

Some parent education programs maintain that a child's homework is a private affair between the child and the school, and they advise parents to encourage direct communication between child and teacher, but to avoid forcing, bribing, or coaxing the child into doing homework. Children who fail to do their work are expected to learn from the "natural consequences" that occur in school.

On the other hand, parents are bombarded with requests to "play an active part" in their children's education, and teachers react with anger or despair when parents resist becoming involved. Recent studies of the effects of preschool programs with a strong parent involvement do better in school later than children whose parents were not involved. But parents, who try to translate this into advice about older children and homework, remain confused.

Common sense suggests that the most effective school-aged children probably lies somewhere between the two extremes. It is not helpful to children if parent does homework for them; neither is it helpful if parents tell a child step by step exactly what to do. One way parents can be helpful is to provide space and time for study. If it is not possible to provide the young student with a desk, parents can promise that the child will be undisturbed at the kitchen table at a certain time each night. This communicates that the parent considers homework an important activity. Parents can also turn off the TV, keep younger children away from the study area, and answer the phone during homework time.

If a teacher calls to enlist parental help in getting children to do their homework, the parent can say, "Thanks for calling, I appreciate your concern, and I'll talk with him/her tonight about ways to get the work in on time." To the child, a parent might say, "Your teacher called this afternoon because she is concerned about you. Apparently you are not turning in the homework she expects. I told her we'd try to come up with a

plan that will make it possible for you to do your work. What kind of plan can you suggest?" Children can sometimes come up with unexpected suggestions. One girl suggested that she not be allowed to watch TV until her homework is done, and a boy said he would set his alarm for an hour earlier in the morning so he could "work while he was fresh."

Establishing a pleasant place and a flexible schedule, talking with the child about assignments, saving articles from magazines or newspapers relevant to study topics, taking the child to a library or museum, or introducing the child to people who are knowledgeable about the subject are all ways to lend parental support. Encouragement of this kind should, in the long run, be more effective than a system of specific rewards and punishments.

Parents may also find it helpful to remind themselves that children are great imitators. If they live with adults who read and talk about what they read, if they are encouraged to join discussions in which each person's ideas are listened to with respect, and if they can be with adults who can say, "I don't know" and then demonstrate ways to find answers to questions, children usually grow up with the skills they have observed.

Finally, parents can remind themselves that a love of books can be very contagious. Making regular family visits to the public library, reading aloud to children as often as possible, encouraging questions and discussions, reading books your children enjoy, and recommending to them age-appropriate favorites of your own will not only help your children in school but will establish them as life-long learners.

Source: Jennifer Birckmayer, Department of Human Development and Family Studies, New York State College of Human Ecology, Cornell University.

In 1522, Nicaragua, which was inhabited by Indian tribes, was conquered by Spain. It won its independence from Spain in 1821.

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TONI WEILAND  
SONDRA WHITEMAN

### Summer Wedding Planned by Couple

Mr.

and Mrs.

Edward

Whiteman

have announced the engagement of their daughter, Sondra, to Thomas Young, son of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Crittenden, also of Atlanta.

The future bride is a 1987 graduate of Wayland Central School. She is employed at Pat's Beauty Salon in Dansville as a cosmetologist.

Her fiance is a 1985 graduate of Wayland Central School. He is a corporal in the Army, serving with the 101st Airborne Division at Ft. Campbell, KY.

A July 16 wedding is planned.

A Feb. 27 wedding is planned.

Mr.

and Mrs.

Jacob

Weiland

of Atlanta

have announced the engagement of their daughter, Toni, to James A. Crittenden, son of Mr. and Mrs. Russell Crittenden, also of Atlanta.

The future bride is a 1987 graduate of Wayland Central School. She is employed at Pat's Beauty Salon in Dansville as a cosmetologist.

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